**STRATEGY NOTES**

**OBSERVATION CHART**

**RESEARCH BASE**

* Judy Moe (LA Unified)

**WHY DO IT**

* Helps trigger students’ prior knowledge and helps teacher assess prior knowledge of students and interests
* Introduces new unit of study through pictures when realia is not possible
* Motivation—stimulates curiosity, interest or inquiry into upcoming unit
* Helps access student’s oral language
* Provides a visual prompt into inquiry thinking
* Is a springboard into the Inquiry Chart
* Promotes sketching at all grade levels and all levels of language proficiency

**STEP-BY-STEP PROCESS**

1. Teacher creates 4-8 posters by attaching 4-6 color photos to each that represent the key concepts, links and key vocabulary listed in the Idea Pages of the unit. The posters are placed around the room with a blank sheet of large paper next to them.
2. Teacher models the observation chart task with a student in front of the class (especially for the ELs). Teacher does a think aloud about what he/she observes, (not what is inferred) and then writes the observation on the attached paper. The teacher then verbalizes a comment and a question and writes these on the attached paper as well. After modeling the activity, the teacher directs student pairs to “Record an observation (what you actually see, not what you “think” it is) and a comment, and a question, or prediction on the attached paper.” (Pairs share a pencil.)
3. With pencils in hand pairs of students walk around the room from poster to poster, discussing what they see and recording an observation, a question, or a comment on the paper.
4. Students visit and respond to as many posters as is possible in the given time frame.
5. Revisit the charts later in the unit to monitor growth that has been made.
6. Can also connect to a Sketch and Write.

**NOTES**

* + Emphasis is on academic discourse, not on writing the questions or comments
  + **National Geographic magazines and the internet are good resources for pictures.**
  + **Is most successful with multiple high interest pictures**

**VARIATIONS**